

**SMALLPOX VACCINE INFORMATION STATEMENT (VIS) SUPPLEMENT E****PREGNANCY AND BREASTFEEDING MEAN YOU SHOULD NOT GET SMALLPOX VACCINE**

The smallpox vaccine is made from a live virus related to smallpox called vaccinia (not smallpox virus). The vaccine stimulates the immune system to react against the vaccinia virus, and develop immunity to it. Immunity to vaccinia also provides immunity to smallpox. For most people, live virus vaccines are safe and effective. In pregnant women, however, smallpox vaccination can cause an infection in the unborn child that can lead to premature delivery, skin rash with scarring, stillbirth, or death of the child after delivery. In addition, it is unknown whether vaccine virus or antibodies are excreted in breast milk. Also, the close physical contact that occurs during breastfeeding increases the chances of accidentally transferring the virus from the vaccination site to the baby.

Pregnancy

- **Pregnant woman should not get the smallpox vaccine.**
- Also, if someone you are in **close physical contact** with is **pregnant**, you should **not get the smallpox vaccine**. (Close contacts include anyone living in your household and anyone you have close physical contact with such as a sexual partner.)
- Women who are vaccinated should **avoid getting pregnant for 4 weeks**.

If you want to get the smallpox vaccine

- Any woman who thinks she could be pregnant or who wants additional assurance that she is not pregnant should perform a morning urine pregnancy test on the day vaccination is scheduled.

After vaccination, prevent pregnancy for a month:

You should wait until the vaccination site has completely healed and the scab has fallen off before you try to become pregnant after vaccination. Take measures to prevent becoming pregnant.

Breastfeeding

- **Women who are breastfeeding should not get the vaccine.** This applies to women who are breastfeeding as well as pumping and then bottle-feeding breast milk.
- Breastfeeding by a close contact is not a contraindication to vaccination. You can get vaccinated if a close contact is breastfeeding.

What if there is an outbreak of smallpox?

If there is a smallpox outbreak, recommendations on who should get vaccinated will change. Anyone who is exposed to smallpox should get vaccinated because they will be at greater risk from the disease than they are from the vaccine. Public health authorities will recommend who should be vaccinated at that time and what measures you can take to try to protect yourself from being exposed to smallpox.

For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/smallpox, or call the CDC public response hotline at (888) 246-2675 (English), (888) 246-2857 (Español), or (866) 874-2646 (TTY)